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SECRETARY'S REPORT.

1897.

To the Officers and Members of the Historical Society of Southern California:

Your secretary reports as follows:

Number of meetings held..... 9
Number of papers read.....16
Number of new members admitted..... 7
Number of members died..... 2

In addition to the regular monthly meetings of the society a meeting was held conjointly with the California Society, Sons of the Revolution, and the Eschscholtzia Chapter, Daughters of the Amreican Revolution, on the evening of July 3 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the first celebration of the Fourh of July held in California. The first public celebration of our nation's birthday in California was held in Fort Moore on Fort Hill, Los Angeles, July 4, 1847.

The following, taken from the Daily Times' report of the meeting, describes the hall decorations and gives a brief synopsis of the exercises:

"A large audience filled the hall of the Friday Morning Club last night for the purpose of assisting at a commemorative celebration of California's first Fourth of July, which occurred just half a century ago. The observance of this semi-centennial Independence day in the history of California was held under the auspices of the Historical Society of Southern California, the Eschscholtzia Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the California Societiy, Sons of the Revolution.

"The hall was draped with flags and red, white and blue bunting. The president's desk was hidden under the folds of the old flag, and above his head hung a large portrait of Washington. At the head of the hall hung the shield of the Historical Society, bearing in panels the insignia of the three governments which have ruled over the territory of California, Spain, Mexico and the United States. Beneath hung the silver shield of the Sons of the Revolution, with a golden-embossed center, surrounded by a horse shoe of gold stars, one for each of the thirteen original States, set in a dark-blue bed. Photographs and maps of old Fort Moore covered the walls and lent viv-

idness to the historical references of the speakers who dealt with the Golden State's first Fourth of July.

"As an introductory measure, a quartette, consisting of Misses Edna Foy, Beatrice Kohler, Vella Knox and Sarah Simonds, played Schubert's "Marche Militaire," which was enthusiastically received.

"After this musical call to order, Dr. J. D. Moody in a few introductory remarks spoke of the peculiar interest of the present day. Just fifty years ago today the first Fourth of July was celebrated in Southern California by Col. Stevenson and his soldiers. It was especially fitting at this half-century date to celebrate in proper form the anniversary of that event. It is the duty and work of the Historical Society to preserve all data bearing upon such occasions, and it is fortunately in possession of a perfect treasure house of historical information, upon which the present and future generation will satisfy their hunger for knowledge. Then referring to the peculiar interest of the day celebrated, and especially on this occasion from the Californian's standpoint, Dr. Moody introduced J. M. Guinn, secretary of the Historical Society, who gave an extremely interesting address on "July 4, 1847," in which he reviewed from a historical standpoint the events leading to the conquest of California. He gave a description of of the building of old Fort Moore on Fort Hill, in this city, where the Fourth of July was first celebrated in California. He described the celebration—the soldiers drawn up in a hollow square and the native Californians seated on their horses beyond. The Declaration of Independence was read in Spanish by Stephen C. Foster for the benefit of the newly-made citizens, and in English by Capt. Stuart Taylor. A salute was fired from the guns of the fort and the day closed with a ball."

After the singing of the "Red, White and Blue" by Capt. J. A. Osgood, in the chorus of which the audience joined heartily, Col. S. O. Houghton was introduced. His subject was "California Fifty Years Ago." Col. Houghton came to the Coast as adjutant of Col. Stevenson's regiment of New York Volunteers, landing in California in March, 1847. He described the country and the manners and customs of the people as he saw them fifty years ago. He related a number of his early personal experiences which lent local color to his reminiscences. His address was exceedingly inte resting.

Holdridge O. Collins, president of the California Society, Sons of the Revolution, delivered an interesting and instructive address on the purposes and work of that society. He introduced his subject by saying: "The society of Sons of the Revolution, existing in nearly

every State and Territory of our country, with an earnest and zealous membership of about twenty thousand gentlemen, has, as one of its principal objects the perpetuation of the records of those whose sacrifices of blood and treasure, wrested from the most powerful nation of the earth, an empire whose natal day, as an independent sovereignty we celebrate this evening." He outlined some of the needs of the present time that demand the cultivation of patriotism in the people. The regent of the Eschscholtzia Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution made a short address on behalf of that organzation. The closing address of the evening was delivered by Major J. A. Donnell, his subject being "Old and New England." He traced the growth of the sentiment of liberty from the days of Magna Charta in old England; its transfer to New England and its expansion and development in the new world.

A number of valuable donations have been received this year. Among the most valuable of these are bound files of the Los Angeles Daily Star, beginning July, 1873, and running consecutively to July, 1877; also the San Diego Weekly Bulletin from July, 1870, to February, 1873, and the Sacramento Daily Record, from December, 1873, to March, 1874. These constitute nine large volumes. They were donated to the society by Major Ben C. Truman, who was editor and publisher of the Bulletin and the Star between the dates mentioned. The society returns him its most sincere thanks for his valuable donation.

The volumes of the Star donated by Major Truman fill a break in our set of that paper; and taken in connection with sets of other city papers in our possession, give us an almost unbroken file of Los Angeles papers from July, 1854, down to the present time—the most nearly complete of any file in existence.

Dr. J. S. Cowen of Fort Jones, Siskiyou county, Cal., through Mr. Noah Levering, presented to the society a number of Indian relics for which the society returns its thanks.

J. M. GUINN, Secretary.